### CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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Pric	es of Goods Sold in State	Stores in 1952	1		,
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	1 kilo of suet		25.00		
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# Prices of Goods Sold in State Stores in 1952

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kilo salt   2.00     kilo noodles   13.00     kilo peas   24.00     kilo beans   28.00     kilo apples   10.00     kilo groats   10.00     kilo groats   10.00     kilo black bread   2.00     kilo black bread   2.00     kilo white bread   2.00     combather   2.45     2.45   7.00     bottle "cigarettes   2.45     2.00   15.00     box matches   2.00     box matches   2.00     bottle vouka   25.00     bottle vouka   25.00     bottle wine   25.00     bottle wine   25.00     bottle wine   30.00     bottle wine   50.00     bottle wine   50.	1 1	iter milk	•	3.50	
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l pair man's socks (generally of	pille	of German manufacture)		40.00	
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		German manufacture)	<del></del>	15.00	
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### Prices of Goods Sold in Free Market

II.	<u> Item</u>	Price in Rubles
,	1 kilo butter (increased to 60 rubles in March 1952)	45.00
	10 eggs (prices varied according to season)	12- 28.00
	<pre>l kile flour l liter milk l kile petatees (in season l kile petatees (in winter) (up to) l kile apples l kile cabbage l kile tomatees (prices varied according)</pre>	20.00 5.00 2.00 8.00 15.00 3.00
•	to season)	5- 15.00

CHANGES IN STANDARD OF LIVING SINCE 1946

particularly during the period following the 1947 currency reform. This improvement was reflected in more food and better clothing at cheaper prices.

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- 3. The best years in terms of prices and availability of food products were 1948 to 1950. Conditions declined somewhat in 1951 and 1952, in that some food items which previously had been Wailable in state stores were seldom obtainable. Articles in short supply in 1952 included butter, sugar, margarine, oil and canned goods. Furthermore, flour was sold only three times a year in the state stores (Christmas, May Day, and October Revolution anniversary).
- 4. There was a seasonal shortage of bread during the entire period of my stay in the Soviet Union. It was rarely available each year for five or six weeks during the months of May and June, shortly before the local grain harvest. This shortage resulted from poor planning. There was simply no flour available at the end of a harvest year.
- 5. In recent years state authorities have continued to carry out price reductions of consumer goods ranging from 10 to 50 per cent. However, these reductions represented no great improvement in later years as they primarily affected articles used in small quantities (salt, for example) or articles which were unavailable in state stores (such as butter). In addition, there was a noticeable deterioration of quality of goods singled out for price reductions.
- 6. There was an enormous improvement in respect to clothing articles after the currency reform. There has been no marked change in this situation in recent years, although it was noticeable that fewer items of clothing were available in the years 1951-52.

7.	Apparently few items of clothing of foreign manufacture were sold in state stores	_25X1 □
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### SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD STANDARD OF LIVING

- The Seviet population reacted very favorably to the periodic reduction of consumer goods' prices. All were happy to hear of these price cuts, although workers often complained bitterly that the price of vodka had not been reduced enough. The price 8. cuts carried out in 1952 were relatively small. The Soviet population noted this fact but they blamed it on the Korean war and on the need to rearm.
- All in all, the people seemed satisfied with the price reductions, even in 1951 and 1952. The Soviets were convinced that living conditions had constantly improved since the end of World War II 25X1 and would continue to improve. Soviets remarked that defense requirements retarded progress in improving the 25X1 standard of living but that such needs would not exist forever, They looked forward to a period of real prosperity when the time came to reduce armament expenditures. The hope was often expressed that the Soviet economy would reach the stage of Communism. It was believed that then a sufficient quantity of consumer goods would be available to meet the needs of all without reliance upon 25X1 a monetary system of exchange

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Persons who had served with the Soviet Army in Germany clearly recognized that standards of living were higher in the West than in the Soviet Union. This fact was apparently accepted by the rest of the population. However, this evidently did not lead the average worker to draw comparisons disadvantageous to the Soviet Union. He simply repeated standard propaganda lines which glibly glossed over this state of affairs. Thus, instead of concluding that the Soviet economic system must be defective because of the lower living standards which it had produced, Soviet workers frequently replied that the Soviet system was better because it had solved the problem of unemployment; that only capitalists have money in the West; that the Soviet economy was advancing forward whereas capitalism was degenerating and would soon collapse.

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- ll. Most Soviet complaints about their living conditions concerned the high prices demanded for consumer goods. Above all, they complained about the high price of vodka. They frequently grumbled too that current prices were still higher than before World War II. A few older people noted that a worker's real wages were higher in tearist times than at present, but this attitude was not held by the average Soviet. Most people tended to reject anything connected with the tearist regime. When talking about comparative wages, they pointed to the increase in monetary wages since the Revolution rather than refer to real wages.
- no complaints from Soviets about the local housing situation, although the Soviets lived under housing conditions which were nothing short of catastrophic. It was not at all unusual, for example, that three Soviet families lived in one room. But the Soviets seemed to be accustomed to primitive housing, as they had known nothing else for many years. Apparently their only concern was to find a place where they could sleep comfortably.

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